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Grow beans. Circular 71 April, 1917

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Grow Beans

Beans will be needed
for our army and navy.
They are now worth
\$9 a bushel.

“The country never appealed in vain to the patriotic service of its farms. In time of need, the farmer has always responded to the duty call of the country. He will do so now. Whether in the field of battle or in the field of production, the farmer can be relied upon to do his share.”

Grow Beans

R. A. MOORE

Beans will be needed this year to supply Uncle Sam's army. A big crop will help meet the threatened food shortage of the entire country. Beans, well-tilled, will undoubtedly bring a good profit to the farmer who plants them.

This year the exceedingly high price of seed potatoes will encourage many to plant beans on proper soils. Seed beans will cost approximately \$4.00 to \$5.00 per acre while potato seed will cost from \$30 to \$40. An average yield of beans for Wisconsin is 11 bushels per acre while with good care 20 bushels can be readily secured. Michigan grows on her sandy soils more than 400,000 acres of beans while on equally available soil Wisconsin only grows 15,000 acres.

Grow Beans

For home use

- Easily grown
- Easy to store
- Easily prepared
- Highly nutritious

For the market

- World's supply is low
- Needed for army use
- Readily transported

BEST SOILS FOR BEANS

The sandy and sand loam soils are best adapted for this crop. While beans will grow well on good soils, the acreage of food crops this year can be profitably increased by adding to normal bean acreage. Ten to twelve counties in the central part of the state and the lighter soils northwest and northeast of this central area are especially adapted to this crop.

HERE'S THE HOW OF BEAN GROWING

The navy bean is the variety most generally grown in Wisconsin, though the kidney beans—black, brown, and white—are grown to some extent. But in times like these it's well to stick to the navy bean—we know it best.

Prepare the ground thoroughly. If it was plowed in the fall, early spring disking followed by a fine tooth harrow will help make a good dust mulch. Spring plowing is best on sandy soils. This harrowing also kills many of the weeds, making cultivation easier. Then, too, the mulch aids in warming up

the soil. Harrowing weekly until the beans are planted will sprout many of the weed seeds, and, of course, it is always best to get the weeds early in the season.

Beans do best grown in rotation. Let beans, if possible, follow clover in the rotation. They can be grown to good advantage following corn, peas, or potatoes, but should not be grown on the same land for several years.

Test the seed to insure a good crop and bigger profits. Who wants to plant seed which won't grow? The frosts last fall may have weakened the growing power of some of the bean seed, so let's be sure to plant only live seed. It's easy to make the test. Take a pie tin and place in it a piece of old flannel which has been boiled to disinfect it. Blotting paper will do if flannel is not at hand. Put 75 or 100 beans on the flannel, covering them with another dampened piece. Cover with another pie tin and put in a warm place. After six days count the beans which grew. Keep the flannel well moistened but not wet. Don't keep the beans too hot, just at a good growing temperature.

How to Grow Beans

Don't experiment this year—

Navy beans are best

Test your seed now

Poor seed is expensive

Prepare ground thoroughly

Plant after corn is in

Cultivate shallow

It's a whole lot cheaper to sprout a few beans before planting them than to wait after planting to see if they will grow.

EARLY JUNE IS BEAN PLANTING TIME

Bean planting follows corn planting. Be sure to wait until the danger of late frosts is past. In Wisconsin the first ten days in June are best for planting beans.

Beans should be drilled in rows from 24 to 30 inches apart. Drop the beans about 4 inches apart in the rows using about half bushel of seed to the acre. If grain drill is used close some of the holes so that you plant the rows at the proper distance. Some farmers plant beans with a corn planter or garden drill. If possible run the rows north and south to let in sunlight.

Watch the depth of planting. In light sandy soils you can put them down as deep as 3 inches; on heavy soils an inch or two is right.

* For seed, go to your local dealer first. If he cannot supply you with good seed the State Department of Agriculture, Madison, has arranged to supply good seed at cost.

CULTIVATE SHALLOW—BEANS ARE SHALLOW ROOTED

If you did a good job of harrowing and the weeds are well killed, you can wait until the beans are nicely above ground before attempting to cultivate. Cultivate shallow as the bean roots are near the surface of the ground. The best cultivation for beans is before they are planted.

Here's "a tip" about cultivating, wait until the moisture is off the leaves before starting in. Dirt scattered on the leaves will usually cause the leaves to rot, reducing the leaf surface. The dirt won't stick if the leaves are dry. Cultivation while wet also distributes the anthracnose and blight diseases.

HARVESTING THAT CROP OF BEANS

If you just have a few acres of beans, they can be pulled very readily and stacked in the field. They are often cut with a mower, though this means some waste from shelling. Where a large acreage is grown a bean harvester is needed. This machine has knives which cut the stems just below the ground where they are soft. Two rows can be harvested at one time and the machine throws them together. After drying for a day or two cock in small piles for further curing, then haul to the barn and store or stack. Stacked beans need a covering of some kind to prevent the rain from discoloring which materially reduces price. Beans should be left to ripen well before harvesting and then cut or pulled during dry weather.

WHEN BEAN THRESHING TIME COMES

Beans can be threshed with regular grain threshers if the machine is provided with blank concaves to prevent splitting the beans. Special bean threshers are generally used if obtainable.

STORING BEANS IS A SIMPLE MATTER

Beans keep well in storage. A shallow bin is a good thing to put them in. If they are damp, shovel them over a time or two until they are dry. One of the beans' best qualities is that they can be stored for several years if kept dry.

FEW DISEASES BOTHER ON SOIL NEW TO BEANS

Blight and rust (anthracnose) are among the few diseases which trouble beans. These diseases, however, generally occur where beans have been grown several years without thought of a rotation. The bean weevil also affects beans to some extent, but there is little danger in sections of the state where beans have not been grown as a general crop. Clean, hand-picked seed is the best disease preventive.